



## ColeJenest & Stone

Shaping the Environment  
Realizing the Possibilities

Land Planning  
+  
Landscape Architecture  
+  
Civil Engineering  
+  
Urban Design

January 20, 2009

### CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM

**Re:** 50246.00 – Town Common Master Plan

**Conference:** City of Greenville City Hall

**Date:** January 07, 2010

**Purpose:** Final Concept Plan Presentation

**Attendees:** Mr. Wayne Bowers – City of Greenville (City)  
Mr. Gary Fenton – City of Greenville Recreation & Parks (City)  
Mr. Lamarco Morrison – City  
Mr. Mark Gillespie – City  
Mr. Niki Jones – City of Greenville Urban Development (City)  
Ms. Sandy Steele – Recreation and Parks Commission (RPC)  
Mr. Chris Mansfield – Redevelopment Commission (RC)  
Ms. Lillian T. Outterbridge – former member RPC  
Mr. Kofi Boone - Kofi Boone Landscape Architecture (KBLA)  
Mr. Kiddee Charoenpanitkul – KBLA  
Mr. Brian C. Jenest, RLA – ColeJenest & Stone (CJS)  
Mr. C. Brian O'Haver, RLA – CJS  
Ms. Jennifer L. Wagner, LEED AP – CJS

#### **Minutes:**

#### **Action By**

- A. After brief introductions, CJS described the purpose of the 100% Conceptual Plan:
1. Present design vision and big picture ideas for the park.
  2. Show bubbles to represent placement, proportion and general location of key features without representing an exact scale.
  3. The Conceptual Plan will guide the next phase of Schematic Design.
  4. The Design Team will present the Conceptual Plan (with any necessary adjustments per City input) to the public at the February 2, 2010 Redevelopment Commission meeting.
- B. The Design Team presented the following:
1. A brief overview of previous Site Analysis and due diligence conducted by the Design Team.



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2. A summary of the internal Design Team workshop where two schemes developed for the park: "The Living Room" and the "Destination/Catalyst".
  - a. The "Living Room" concept involves creating a comfortable, informal space for residents of Greenville to use on a daily basis.
  - b. The "Destination/Catalyst" concept creates an attraction for visitors and a potential revenue source for the City by spurring private enterprise in and around the park.
3. An overview of the historic analysis and the possible implications historic events and structures may have on the design for the park. Key events/features on the site were noted as:
  - a. The former Sycamore Hill Baptist Church
  - b. The meeting place/ "Rough and Ready" practice/ baptism location along the river.
  - c. Mixed-use/lively activity along Evans Street.
  - d. The river was a source of jobs for residents, specifically a dredging company and unloading/loading barges.
  - e. Third Street was the former boundary line separating black and white neighborhoods in Greenville and the former black neighborhood on the site was cleared for urban renewal in the late 1950's.
4. An explanation of the Design Vision for the Town Common:
  - a. Design Statement: The Town Common should be a model of urban sustainability (improving economic and social conditions while preserving and maintaining environmental quality) that acknowledges and celebrates its history while also making connections to its neighbors and the downtown core. It should be a multi-functional space that engages the river and allow for active and passive uses.
  - b. Design Principles:
    - i. Active edges and entrance.
    - ii. Improve visibility of park.
    - iii. Make river more accessible and visible.
    - iv. Create varying experiences within the park for



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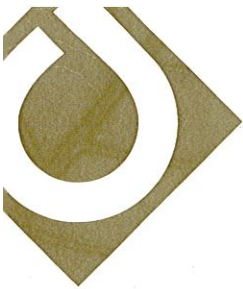
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different users.

- v. Address priorities identified by public.
  - vi. Create a lawn or green for events and active use.
  - vii. Narrow First Street.
  - viii. Spur private enterprise.
  - ix. Create environmentally-sensitive park.
  - x. Reflect the heritage of the site.
  - xi. Link to the greenway and River Park North.
5. Images explaining a physical manifestation of each of the Design Principles.
  6. A brief overview of the four 50% Concept Plans shown to the City in mid-December. These plans showed two (2) alternatives for the two (2) concepts: "Catalyst/Destination" and "Living Room".
  7. A description of the Final Concept Plan. The Final Concept Plan incorporated elements and ideas from all four (4) of the 50% concept plans based upon feedback from the City (see attached plan). Major elements include:
    - a. A civic building on the western side of the park that could be a multi-function space that could be a revenue source for the City.
    - b. A garden and plaza on the site of the former church.
    - c. Formal gardens and greens relating to the Civic structure, along with an informal ramble in the interior of the site with curvilinear pathways and terracing.
    - d. A strong promenade axis on the site of the once lively Evans Street extension through the site.
    - e. A gateway plaza with a fountain element at the entrance to the park on Evans Street.
    - f. Steps providing access to the river.
    - g. Historic and art landmarks.
    - h. A memorial walk leading through a ramble.
    - i. A new location for the amphitheater on the east side of





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the park with improved restrooms and amenities.

- j. A residential component on the east side of the park to anchor the park, relate to the residential adjacent to the park and reflect the history of the site as a former residential neighborhood.
- k. A marsh on the eastern side next to Town Creek with boardwalks.
- l. A kayak rental building and launch site.
- m. Vendor space along a large green adjacent to First Street.
- n. A ferry connection to River Park North across the river.

### 3. Discussion Items:

- A. The idea of a ferry was met with enthusiasm. The ferry could provide a connection from the greenway to River Park North. This could be a potential way to create eco-tourism on the river as a regional attraction or an attraction for parents of ECU students.
- B. The group discussed whether a boat launch was appropriate for the site. The general feel was that a kayak launch might be more appropriate because a sufficient boat launch exists at Port Terminal down river.
- C. The group discussed the possibility of floating docks that could fluctuate with the tidal water and provide access to the river. These could be placed with little disturbance to the river or bulkhead to reduce the time needed for permitting.
- D. The residential component was discussed at length. The group felt it was a sensitive subject due to the former residential on the site that was removed in the late 1950's. The Design Team discussed how bringing residential back might heal some of those wounds as long as the residential element was not high-end and included affordable housing units. Selling a piece of land for a private use such as this could also help raise revenue for the City to support the redesign of the park. The idea of encouraging mixed-use with residential across the street from the park, rather than within the park was discussed as a possible strategy.
- E. There are opportunities for collaboration with ECU in master planning the Town Common. The Design Team needs to meet with JJR to learn how the master plan for ECU will relate to the Town Common. ECU has expressed interest in housing students closer to campus. There are several surface parking lots near the Town Common, on the east



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side of uptown that are owned by ECU and could be developed in the future. ECU owns the Willis building across from Town Common. Ripple City (east of Town Common) is mostly rental property and houses many students. This area needs to be revitalized.

F. The amphitheater is not very old, but it is believed it could be moved to a more advantageous location. Mr. Craig Goess with Greenville Toyota sponsored the amphitheater.

G. The connection to the greenway, west of the park, needs to be incorporated into the Town Common master plan. Mr. David Brown with City of Greenville Engineering stated that the greenway connection cannot occur underneath the Pitt/Green Street Bridge.

CJS/KBLA

H. Funding sources were discussed for the Town Common. The City anticipates utilizing grants and/or creating a bond referendum for the site.

I. The City should be protective of what happens adjacent to the park in order to encourage a healthy park and uptown area. The City might want to consider subsidizing the establishment of retail in the area through tax abatements or other means.

J. The Design Team asked if there were any elements of the plan that should be addressed before the public meeting:

a. CJS asked if the residential component in the plan would be such a sensitive issue with the public as to distract from the rest of the plan. The group felt it was still worth considering, but that it would be a "hot button" issue. Perhaps the residential component in the park should be shown as mixed-use instead to lessen the impact.

CJS

b. The Design Team should show how parking could work on First Street for the public meeting in February.

c. People might wonder why a fairly large portion of the park is being shown as a marsh. The idea that the marsh could provide mitigation for going into the river with steps should be mentioned at the public meeting.

CJS

#### 4. Next Steps:

A. The City will provide comments to CJS in one week.

B. CJS will incorporate the comments into a slightly revised Concept Plan for the public meeting.



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- C. The public meeting in on February 2, 2010.
- D. After the public meeting, CJS will have four (4) weeks for schematic design.
- E. CJS will submit a 50% schematic plan on March 5, 2010.

Please contact the undersigned with any additions or corrections to these minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

COLEJENEST & STONE, P.A.



Jennifer L. Wagner, LEED AP

bgc

cc: All Attendees  
Ms. Kaye A. Smith – H&A  
Ms. Susan Harbage Page – Artist  
Mr. Michael S. Cole, Sr., RLA, LEED AP – CJS  
Ms. Jane S. Alexander, RLA – CJS  
Mr. John A. Woodlief, PE – CJS